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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [SMIG](#) [KFRD](#) [ASEC](#) [PREF](#) [ELAB](#)
SUBJECT: SEVENTH ANNUAL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) REPORT
FOR FRANCE, PART ONE OF TWO

REF: 2006 STATE 202745

SUBJECT: FRANCE CONTRIBUTION FOR 2006 TIP REPORT

SUMMARY: France remains a destination country for trafficked persons, mainly women trafficked for prostitution from Eastern Europe and Africa. There are between 15,000 and 18,000 prostitutes in France, of which about two-thirds -- between 10,000 and 12,000 -- are foreigners and thus likely to have been trafficking victims. Among European nations,

many of whom regulate legalized prostitution, France's abolitionist stance makes it relatively inhospitable terrain for pimps and traffickers. France views itself as a European leader in effectively combating trafficking with extensive legislation; a centralized trafficking police force; the provision of temporary residence permits to trafficking victims; growing diplomatic initiatives with source countries; and a newly energized effort to coordinate work between government and non-government anti-trafficking actors through a series of conferences, the first scheduled for March 13th in Paris. Evidence of France's success lies in the numbers; even as France has persisted in its policing efforts, trafficking arrests of Eastern Europeans have begun falling, a fact the French attribute to traffickers seeking less difficult environments outside France. END SUMMARY.

¶1. Answers below are keyed to section and paragraph numbers in reftel. Embassy Paris TIP point of contact is Charlie Davis, davisr3@state.gov. Phone 33 1 43 12 23 93 (or IVG 8-498-2393), fax 33 1 43 12 26 63.

Time spent on TIP report:
FS-04 poloff: 50 hours.
LES-9 50 hours.
FS-1 Deputy Political Counselor: 5 hours' review.
POL M-C: 3 hours' review.

OVERVIEW - Question 27.

¶A. France is a destination country for trafficked persons, mainly women trafficked for prostitution from Eastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria, and to a lesser extent Albania) and Africa (Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Cameroon). France's national Central Office for the Repression of Trafficking in Persons (OCRETH, a division of the National Police in the Central Directorate of the Judicial Police in the Interior Ministry) estimates that there are between 15,000 and 18,000 prostitutes in France, of which about two-thirds -- between 10,000 and 12,000 -- are foreigners and thus likely to be trafficking victims.

OCRETH estimates the numbers and origin of prostitutes from statistics of those arrested for solicitation, which was criminalized in the 2003 Law on Internal Security (LSI). OCRETH noted that in 2005, the national police identified 1,189 trafficking victims, 1,148 of whom were women. Three-quarters of the victims were foreign. Forty percent came from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, while nearly twenty percent came from Africa. This regional representation followed the same pattern seen in 2003 and 2004. In 2006, police identified 1,219 victims of trafficking, 1,136 of whom were women. In 2006, foreign women continued to account for three quarters of the victims identified, but the ratio of Eastern European women fell, while the percentages of African, South American and Asian women climbed. OCRETH interim Director Emile Lain attributes this to greater success in interdicting major Eastern European trafficking networks through a focus on their methods and with the help of partnerships with Romanian and Bulgarian law enforcement. OCRETH, he says, has begun developing similar approaches to understanding and combating African and Asian trafficking strategies in the hopes of similar success.

While the majority, by far, of trafficking victims in France are brought to work in the sex trade, there is also clandestine forced labor, primarily of young women and girls, as domestic workers. Since domestic slavery is by its nature hidden (the victims are kept working inside and often permitted no leave time, and have no interchange with the outside world that would allow them to tell their story), the Committee Against Modern Slavery (CCEM) finds it difficult to estimate the numbers of victims. Since its founding in 1994, it has assisted some 480 victims, of which a majority are African, and 88% are women. Nearly 30 percent arrived on French territory as minors. CCCEM also notes that in about one-fifth of cases, the 'employers' are diplomats serving in

France, enjoying diplomatic immunity.

1B. Traffickers often tell victims they will be coming to work in child care, restaurants, etc., and then seize their papers when the victims arrive. Often traffickers subject the women to brutal physical violence, including repeated rapes, to render them submissive. In other cases, the women know they will be coming to prostitute themselves, and that they will have to repay a debt for passage, but do not know that they will be subjected to such violent conditions and to the confiscation of their papers.

In the case of African victims, often another woman (known as a "mama" or "sorceress") will subject the woman to be trafficked to a sort of 'voodoo' ritual before her departure from Africa, in which the "sorceress" takes bodily substances from her -- for example, blood, hair, clothes, etc. - and puts a hex on her. In this case, the woman believes so strongly that the sorceress can always see/hear her actions that she is effectively frightened from ever speaking to authorities, even in what would seem to Westerners to be a "safe" situation. Because the threats also extend to her family, the woman is effectively discouraged from denouncing her traffickers, or even trying to escape. Emile Lain of OCRETH maintains that this continues to be a common strategy for both recruiting and restraining victims. OCRETH, in a planned collaboration with Nigerian law enforcement beginning in 2007 (see paragraph J, Investigation/Prosecution), hopes to focus official Nigerian attention on this dynamic.

Many trafficking victims are in France legally; the largest single group of trafficking victims in France is from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, with most coming from Romania and Bulgaria. France does not require visas for visitors from either country (they joined the EU on January 1, 2007) for visits of less than 90 days. Nigerian victims can demand political asylum, providing them a means to stay in France legally. Several NGO contacts and OCRETH,s Emile Lain agree that perhaps 80 percent of trafficking victims in France have legal papers.

As with most crime, trafficking in persons represents a shifting terrain. As French authorities more effectively rein in some forms, others arise. Emile Lain acknowledges that his office is beginning to see the growth of distinctly Chinese pimping networks. Some of these involve children, and some older women. They tend to operate exclusively within a closed Asian immigrant community, posing serious challenges for French law enforcement. OCRETH, Lain said, is investing energy and resources to investigate and interdict this new, specific scourge.

1C. The French government is determined to combat trafficking in persons and is making a good-faith effort to seriously address trafficking. French government spending is subject to some degree to the Eurozone requirement to limit its budget deficit to 3 percent of GDP. Within this framework, however, French law enforcement is well funded and effective. Furthermore, the GOF supports many NGOs with victim assistance and reinsertion through national, regional and municipal agencies. Without government assistance, these NGOs could not function. Corruption is not a problem.

1D. The inter-ministerial commission on trafficking prepared a report in 2006, mandated by the 2003 Law on Internal Security (LSI), that describes the character of trafficking in France, as well as France's progress in combating it. The report was presented to the French parliament and published in autumn 2006. It documents many of the concerns this Trafficking in Persons Report has enumerated over the years, focusing on the causes, evolution, and statistical reality of prostitution in France. It defines the government,s methods of prevention, as well as the victim protection measures it and NGOs provide. The report shows clear tracking in all the regions and cities of prostitution and other forms of trafficking. It illustrates the working relationships between NGOs and government agencies, and shows a breakdown of the 7 million euros of government aid to NGOs given in 2004. This

report draws on trafficking statistics that are compiled and published by OCRETH each year in late April, and is furnished to NGOs, the press and others on a request basis.

PREVENTION - Question 28.

1A. Yes, France acknowledges that trafficking is a problem. January 17, in opening a conference on missing and exploited children for First Ladies and Queens that his wife hosted at the Elysee, President Chirac included remarks on the subject of child trafficking. Chirac has periodically raised public awareness of trafficking, of domestic slavery and of the sex industry, as documented in Post's 2006 TIP cable. This conference, which First Lady Laura Bush attended, received wide coverage in the media, and resulted in the announcement of the creation of phone hotlines for victims available across Europe and detailing the incidence of trafficking in France and across Europe.

1B. The inter-ministerial commission combating trafficking includes the OCRETH (which leads the government's anti-trafficking efforts), along with several government ministries, including Interior, Justice, Education, Tourism, Health and Solidarity, Foreign Affairs, and Employment, Social Cohesion, and Lodging. OCRETH also has strong ties with the anti-pimping brigade of the Paris police. OCRETH is the operational and political focal point for French efforts; police units all over the country turn their cases over to OCRETH if they are found to involve trafficking, and OCRETH serves as the designated correspondent for inquiries (for example, the OCRETH chief testifies before the Senate on trafficking questions).

1C. In addition to President Chirac's public statements, the government continued its participation in an anti-trafficking poster awareness campaign in 2006, with a wider dissemination than in previous years. The posters sought to create awareness of the fact that prostitutes in France may be trafficking victims and bore the words: "Slaves for Sale: Now you Know." The GOF has also funded ad campaigns) including 30-second TV spots on all the major channels in 2006) such as a CCEM ad presenting the realities of child prostitution and sex tourism. Another makes clear it is a criminal act to have sex with minors. All schools in the National Education system must educate children on the risks of internet activity, and especially on the risks of blogging and entering chat rooms. The government has forced internet providers to provide and publicize blocking software for parents, and the government funds a site, www.mineurs.gouv.fr, advertised in print and internet media, where individuals are encouraged to tip off the government to illegal child porn and child sex websites.

1D. The government continues to fund the campaign of the NGO ECPAT-France combating child sex tourism; all Air France flights (and Air France buses between Paris and the two Paris airports) broadcast a video warning French tourists against engaging in sex with minors and alerting them that their actions on foreign soil are subject to prosecution in France.

In addition, profits from three out of the seven Air France products available for purchase on board Air France planes (a stuffed bear, a Concorde model, and a pen) are given to ECPAT. All tourism students in France must do course work on sex tourism.

1E. Coordination and collaboration between government entities and other relevant organizations is improving. Patrick Hauvuy, who directs the re-insertion service of ALC Nice, was a beneficiary of an International Visitor Leadership Program in the United States last fall. In his debrief at the Embassy, he recounted that on the whole, communication and collaboration between NGOs, law enforcement, and other government agencies is not as organized as in the U.S. Several other NGO contacts support this conclusion, but acknowledge that the situation is improving.

OCRETH will host its first National Day of Cooperation on

March 13, to be attended by magistrates, prosecutors, police, academics, and NGO representatives. Among the goals are to establish new relationships; to develop new training opportunities for public and law enforcement officials; and to educate magistrates and prosecutors on the anti-trafficking provision of the 2003 LSI.

Several NGOs, for instance CCEM and ACPE, have seen a change in government attitudes in the last several years. Whereas the NGOs previously had to cajole and prod police and judicial bodies to accept NGO-offered training sessions, these same agencies now seek and request such training from NGOs. The motivation for sensitization to trafficking issues comes as much from within the government) particularly OCRETH) as from the NGOs. In general, civil society plays a robust role in France, and the French government recognizes its role in the battle.

1F. France adequately monitors its borders, but a large part of metropolitan French border-monitoring has been subsumed into the Schengen Treaty, which covers the majority of France's land borders and some of its air traffic as well (persons arriving in flights, trains, and cars coming into France from other Schengen member countries such as Belgium, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Luxembourg are not subject to border controls because passengers have either gone through Schengen border control at the point where they entered Schengen territory, or they themselves are Schengen residents and thus receive no examination).

1G. The mechanism for coordination and communication between various ministries and agencies is the Interministerial Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which OCRETH chairs. France also has a Working Group on the Fight Against Sex Tourism Involving Children, which includes the Ministries of Social Security, Aged Persons, Handicapped Persons and Family; Minister-Delegate for Tourism; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Interior; Youth Ministry; Justice Ministry; NGOs, tourism-sector representatives, and other experts.

1H. France's current national plan of action to combat trafficking in persons was enunciated in 2002. A copy (in French) is with EUR/WE.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

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